

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 /099 W

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R 281026Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1668

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

COMIDEASTFOR

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0299

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SO ET PFOR PINS

SUBJ: SOMALI REACTION TO ETHIOPIAN DISTURBANCES

1. WE BELIEVE GSDR HAS MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT CURRENT TROUBLES IN ETHIOPIA. ON ONE HAND, WHATEVER WEAKENS ETHIOPIA IS WEL-COMED IN MOGADISCIO. ON OTHER HAND, GSDR HAS ITW OWN PROBLEMS WITH RISING PRICES AND MILITARY MORALE AND DOES NOT WANT ETHIOPIAN VIRUS TO SPREAD TO SOMALIA. THUS THERE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY NO REPORTING OF ETHIOPIA'S CURRENT TROUBLES IN SOMALI PRESS OR RADIO.

2. WE HAVE TO DATE NO SPECIFIC CLUES AS TO WHAT ACTION GSDR WILL TAKE TO PROFIT BY ETHIOPIA'S DIFFICULTIES. OUR ESTIMATE IS THAT, IF THERE IS VIRTUAL DISSOLUTION OF ETHIOPIAN STATE STRUCTURE OR A DISINTEGRATION OF ETHIOPIAN FORCES IN OGADEN, GSDR WOULD BE VERY STRONGLY TEMPTED TO TAKE MILITARY ACTION TO SEIZE AT LEAST PART OF OGADEN. LESSER DEGREE OF DETERIORATION ON ETHIOPIAN SIDE, OR PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL OF ETHIOPIAN MILITARY UNITS FROM OGADEN MIGHT BRING LIMITED SOMALI PROBES INTO AREA.

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3. PAST DAYS' EVIDENCE OF ETHIOPIAN INTERNAL WEAKNESSES WILL INCREASE INCENTIVES FOR SOMALI SUPPORT OF EXISTING GUERILLA

MOVEMENTS, AND FOR INCITEMENT OF SUCH A MOVEMENT IN THE OGADEN. GSDR MIGHT WELL INCREASE ITS ACTIVITY IN THIS FIELD IN BOTH IMMEDIATE AND LONGER-TERM FUTURE. HOWEVER, PRESENT MILITARY REGIME IS UNPOPULAR WITH MANY SOMALI NOMADS. DOUBTS OF REGIME ABOUT DEGREE TO WHICH GUERILLA ACTIVITY CAN BE SAFELY AND EFFECTIVELY CONTROLLED, AND FEAR OF POSSIBLE ETHIOPIAN ATTEMPTS TO RETALIATE IN KIND, WILL BE IMPORTANT FACTORS WORKING FOR CONSERVATISM ON THIS SUBJECT.

KIRK

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